

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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THE DOCTOR'S MIXTURE.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER X. MRS. LEADER RALLIES.

ON the next morning, however, there was a change, and awakening, after that too brief holiday. A telegram arrived directing the carriage to be sent to meet the morning train, and by ten o'clock Mrs. Leader was at home again, and once more in command. She walked into the library and sent for Mr. Leader. He came, but attended by his daughter. There was an air of extra dignity about Mrs. Leader, drawn, perhaps, from the elevating atmosphere whence she had just descended. She scarcely waited for the family greetings, when she broke out with:

"I have got a letter from Mrs. Raper, saying that you have offered rooms to those people. Is this piece of folly true?"

Mr. Leader hesitated, and grew confused. "Cecil was very ill," he stammered, "and we thought that the change of air——"

She gave him a look of contempt. "Oh! of course. I suppose those low creatures talked you over: they are clever enough for that: but I shall have no such degrading intrusion. We are not going to have our house overrun by this low Doctor and his satellites: write and tell them that it is out of the question."

Mary had been listening with astonishment, waiting for her father to make some defence. To her surprise he was turning away, uttering some faint protest. Then she interposed, her cheeks glowing.

"You cannot refuse! Oh, it is common humanity! It would disgrace us! Especially now that papa has forgiven and forgotten all."

"Forgiven and forgotten!" repeated the lady. Is this true?"

"No, not exactly," said Mr. Leader, in great nervousness; "but as he was lying there sick, I thought——"

"Yes, of course; just what I said. These low intriguers got round you."

"They are no intriguers," said the daughter, in a low, firm voice. "Within these few days, papa and I have learnt to know what they are, and what is their true nature. I am proud to have such a sister, and think now it was the most sensible act of Cecil's foolish life."

Mrs. Leader's strange face paled as she listened. Such a thing had never happened before. This quiet girl had never dared to make the faintest opposition to her views. She was aghast at this boldness, still more at the steady eye and firm tones with which the objection was made.

"This does not concern you," Mrs. Leader said at last; "you cannot understand this insult to your family. Until you are old enough, please not to interfere."

"But surely it concerns papa—the head of our family—he can give shelter to his own son, who is sick and broken?"

"But it concerns me," said Mrs. Leader, working gradually into heat. "Some respect is owing to me, and I do not choose to be exposed to drunken orgies and disgraceful conduct in the house I live in. Those people must not come—and your father shall not force them on me. You must not interfere in these things. Who gave you any authority? Surely you forget your position in reference to me. I am not your mother, but I am your father's wife: though he seems to care very little that respect shall be paid to me."

Again the daughter answered firmly: "You would not care for such respect as

was to be obtained by sacrificing his son. Papa will stand by him in this, I know, as his honour is concerned."

"Is this with your sanction, sir?" said Mrs. Leader, turning furiously on him. "Have you arranged this between you during your absence? Is it your plot? Have you both settled all this in defiance of me?"

"Timorous Mr. Leader, beside himself with terror, tried to soothe her. "I never meant it—it will be only for a few days, and——"

"It will not be for an hour," she said.

"There, that's an end of it! You and your daughter shall make no arrangements about my house, without consulting me. And you, Mary Leader, go to your room, and don't dare to interfere with me in future. I've been only too good a mother to you. Another thing, I have invited company down to Leadersfort all for your sake. You shall come down there with me at once, and we shall see if these people then dare to present themselves!"

She left father and daughter—the former quite overwhelmed. "You see, my dear, you brought on all this. It is most foolish of you. I told you there would be something unpleasant. We ought to have consulted her first."

"And what shall we say to Cecil and Katey, if we allow them to be treated in this way?" she asked vehemently. "Surely, papa, you feel for them? You will not let yourself be changed from what you know to be right?"

"Well, now, don't worry me any more about it," said he, testily. "This is the way I am always harassed among you all."

His daughter sighed. No more could be done for the moment. But this wise, quiet girl only required time and thought, and would not be found wanting.

Mrs. Leader, indignant, but triumphant, during the rest of the day, proceeded with her preparations. She sent for Mr. Leader again, much as the chief of the police would invite a suspicious character to wait upon him. He came all nervous and alarmed. She was in "her tantrums," as her fits of ill-humour were designated in the servants' hall.

"Is it you that have set your daughter on, to beard me in this way?" she asked of her trembling husband. "Who has put you up to this? How could you dare to insult me by sending back the people whom I sent down to you?"

"My dear, I never meant such a thing. But I thought that really it was a matter

that—as I was head of the house, and my own son——"

"You head of the house," she repeated with infinite contempt, which made Mr. Leader feel most uncomfortable. "You should give over such nonsense. Where would you be but for me? What position would you hold? Would not all society be laughing at your gauche, humdrum ways, but for me? Now let us hear no more of it. Mr. Amos will be here to-morrow with the papers, and I shall see myself that you do it."

She had never spoken to him in this decided, but very offensive fashion, and she had gone beyond judicious limits.

"I cannot do that—at least not as yet."

"Why not, sir? What do you mean?"

"I must have time to consider, and think it over. It is a dreadful act of cruelty and oppression, and I would be responsible. No power on earth shall get me," he added, with a sort of desperation, "to do what is wrong, or what I should repent of all my life—at least," he added, hurriedly, "until I have had time to think it well over."

Mrs. Leader did not smile at this rather comic compromise with morality; but she could see that the foolish man had been stirred up to resistance, and that he would resist. A little compromise might do no harm, a little delay would make no difference. It did not much matter, after all. Allies were about to join their forces to hers: Lady Seaman was coming down to stay "for a short time," as it was complacently described; though the lady's "short times" were more like the protracted quartering of a garrison. Mrs. Leader did not press the matter for the moment. But she determined that they should go down at once to Leadersfort, there to receive Lady Seaman; that the lawyers should come down after a few days, and that then the unhappy "head of the house" should be intimidated into doing what he was bound to do. But with this resolve she had conceived an almost deadly dislike of her step-daughter, whose suggestion she now knew had prompted this resistance.

One thing, indeed, restored her good-humour: she revelled in anticipation of the mortifying repulse in store for that low, scheming Doctor and his intriguing daughter. She enjoyed the picture of their discomfiture, as they would drive up. "The house unfortunately would be full," and the degenerate pair, with their crafty and pushing leader, must go back and board and lodge at his own mean abode. The pro-

spect of this little coup quite soothed Mrs. Leader's temper; and her husband and his daughter were quite gratified to see the change that had taken place in her, and the resumption of her usual placid and sweet manner.

In Mr. Leader's rather weak soul this produced a reaction. He began to think he had yielded rather hastily to impulse: he was a little ashamed of having been persuaded so easily by his daughter. He felt, however, that he must do something to stop that terrible Doctor coming to Leadersfort, so he wrote off hastily to Folkestone a very soothing letter. Men of Mr. Leader's character find a letter a very convenient sort of mantlet or shield, which protects them while they fire some missile which they want courage to discharge, when face to face with the enemy. He wrote:

DEAR DOCTOR FINDLATER,—I regret to say that during my absence Mrs. Leader has made arrangements to fill our house with company. This will prevent us receiving my son and his wife at present, at which I am much disappointed. I shall write to Cecil at greater length to-morrow.

This sent off, he felt much relieved in his mind. The meeting of such hostile powers as the Doctor and Mrs. Leader would be something dreadful, and the very idea of the terrible Doctor driving up with the invalid in charge, being refused admittance through lack of room, and then asking to see the master of the house, in order to demand an explanation, made him almost shudder.

Mrs. Leader, also, without taking counsel with any one, had her despatch to send away. It was a letter to Mrs. Raper, the housekeeper.

MRS. RAPER,—You need not trouble yourself to prepare apartments for Mr. Leader's son and his wife, as you were, perhaps, directed to do by Doctor Findlater. In future you will not pay attention to any orders except to such as come from me. We shall be down ourselves in a few days, and will possibly receive a large party, so you will have everything ready.

On the next morning everything was ready, and the family drove to the railway. Lady Seaman was coming a day or two later, and had signified that she wished

some nice people to be asked to meet her—in short, that the arriére ban of gentility should be raised, the establishment be put on a fashionable war footing, and the whole Landwehr, Landsturm, &c., of footmen, cooks, country-house walking gentlemen and ladies, called out. This was to be done within an incredibly short space of time; but some of those costly and genteel impressarios, whom Mrs. Leader always applied to in her difficulties, entreated her to give herself no trouble or anxiety, but “to leave it all to them,” and they would send their people down. Out had gone the flattering invitations; divers genteel young men, whom she did not know, were appealed to, almost ad misericordiam, through third parties. Indeed, did it comport with the rules of polite society, the lady of the house would have gladly sent them what lawyers call their viaticum—that is, their expenses—with a cheque to supply new dresses, &c., and even cover the cost of all inconvenience.

With these arrangements on foot, the Leader family set out from London. Mrs. Leader was in a placid, tranquil humour all the way, smiling sweetly on the guards and various officials that they encountered—a temper that gave Mr. Leader great comfort. There was the usual lavishness of expense, which made even a short railway trip cost for them four times what it did for other families: heavy fees to secure no particular advantages—some sort of special carriage, which somehow proved the same as another. This was always the result in the case of the Leader family. Arrived at Tilston in the evening, they were met by the family carriages—the great omnibus and barouche—and drove away to Leadersfort. Then they rode up the avenue, gliding and winding among its noble trees, nobler than that quiet, fluttering little man and his pushing, extravagant lady. The hall-door was not flung open by obedient menials, for the discipline at Leadersfort was but of an imperfect sort. They had to wait some time, and the bell had to be pulled twice. Suddenly the door was thrown open, not by the salaried John or Mary of the place. A smiling face was put forward, with a hearty voice greeting:

“My dear Mr. and Mrs. Leader, welcome to your own house! Heard the bell, and just slipped down from Cecil's bedside. He's doing nobly.”

It was Doctor Findlater

CHAPTER XI. SINGLE COMBAT.

NEITHER Mr. nor Mrs. Leader could speak a word. The former, from positive consternation; the latter, from a sort of fury which made her fearful of trusting herself to open her mouth. She descended from her barouche, swept by him into the house, calling out, "Send Raper to me in the library."

There arrived, she burst out: "What is the meaning of this—how dare you disobey my commands?"

"If you please, I could do nothing. This Doctor drove up when I was out, and then Mr. Cecil said he was going to his own old room. And when he was there the Doctor said it was too close for an invalid, and so Mr. Cecil chose one of the large state rooms, and——"

"What impertinence! They shall all pack out, every one of them, this night. If Mr. Leader has no spirit——"

"Oh, that Doctor, ma'am, is wonderful. He leads and drives every one. But he has really done Mr. Cecil good."

Cunning Doctor! He had been making outlay of time and trouble to propitiate this minor potentate, and had succeeded. Here he was, entering with Mr. Leader, explaining the whole thing:

"You see, my dear sir, all arrangements were made. We came off at once, wanting to give our malady the slip, and leave it behind at Folkestone. Faith, we left it in bed asleep; and, of course, when we got here, into Cecil's own house and lands, and Mrs. Leader's orders reached the housekeeper, why the channel was so unofficial, you know, that you couldn't blame him for taking no notice."

"You needn't try to impose on us with such stories," said Mrs. Leader, "attempting to pass off your own share in these matters. This is some low, vulgar scheme which you have planned, and are accountable for. And I tell Mr. Leader here to your face, you and your party must leave this night, or I shall——"

"Firstly," said the Doctor, very calmly, "I must beg that no such words as schemes be applied. It's uncalled for. I'm your son's—I beg pardon, I mean Mr. Leader's son's—medical adviser, and have brought him through a dangerous illness. That is my crime. Mrs. Leader quite forgets her high position when she uses such language."

"I say it was a scheme—you and your daughter forcing yourselves into our——"

"Not a word about Katey to me, please!

As to forcing oneself into a family, that's been done before now, and will be again. As for turning your son out on the road in his present state, that, of course, will be according as you persuade Mr. Leader. But, in either case, go or stay, my child Katey does not separate from the bone of her bone!"

She could not find words to reply. Mr. Leader now interposed nervously.

"I think, my dear, it would be better to settle this all to-morrow. We needn't decide anything to-night. And really, turning out Cecil in his present state——"

"Oh, it's unnatural—it's inhuman—why the magistrates wouldn't allow it. Of course," added the Doctor with a sneer, "it's not Mrs. Leader's own son—who may come to the front, maybe, by-and-bye, and that makes the difference with her." This ungenerous thrust on the part of the Doctor went home. He knew well that this was "a sore place."

In this fashion the enemy was routed, and retreated. The Doctor went to see his patient and report progress. Burning with fury and mortification, Mrs. Leader turned to seek Katey, an enemy to whom she fancied she was more equal. She sent for her to her boudoir. Then Mrs. Leader accosted her abruptly:

"You have established quarrels in my house, and have so far succeeded. How long is it your purpose to remain?"

Katey gazed at her in wonder—she knew nothing of what had gone on. "Why you asked us here! Cecil is your son, or Mr. Leader's——"

"I never asked you. You have forced yourself in here against my wish or consent; or your father has. But it is a mistake, as your whole party shall find. I am the wrong person to treat in that way. No one ever took me in twice."

"I do not understand you, Mrs. Leader. I am your son's wife; you should not speak to me about taking you in. It is unjust—unworthy."

"You shall not stay here. Your low father shall not quarter himself on us!"

"He would disdain it," said Katey, her lips trembling. "But your cruel words do not affect us. There is no discredit in our staying here. It is Cecil's home. He was here before you were, Mrs. Leader. I am his wife, and shall stay with him."

At this moment appeared Mary Leader.

"For Heaven's sake, let all this be adjourned till the morning! It is only a question of one poor bedroom. Let us have

no more miserable bickerings. It is unworthy of us. This is my sister—I have received you as such, dearest Katey, and so has papa. You have come here with his approval, and you must not be turned away. Let all this end. It is really unchristian.”

Mrs. Leader could not reply: her lips trembled, her foot pattered audibly on the floor. It would have required a cleverer head than hers to devise something to meet the crisis. She felt she was over-matched. She found herself helpless—almost a stranger in that house—with every one against her. So she had to retreat. Her face broke into one of her usual temporising smiles, and she said, as she left the room:

“I have no wish to do anything, but to keep up the respect due to your family. I have never had any view but that. However, as you are here, I suppose you must stay for the present. But Mr. Leader and I will consult what is to be done for the future.”

At that moment was born in her soul the bitterest and most ferocious hatred towards her step-daughter that could possibly be conceived. Katey, fluttering joyfully to the sick-bed with news of this happy accommodation, little dreamed what a terrible and vindictive enemy had of a sudden risen up against her.

What passed between Mr. and Mrs. Leader was not very clearly ascertained. But the result was the departure of a messenger that very evening with a letter for the Doctor from Mr. Leader himself.

RAIDS OVER THE BORDER.

THE LAND OF SCOTT. PART I.

“OVER the hills and far away!” beyond pursuit of the arch enemy, Business, whom I have left behind me, glad to get rid of him for awhile, in order that I may afterwards be able to tackle him with renewed vigour. A friend accompanies me, who has never been in Scotland, who has long wished to go, who has studied its history, and imbued his mind with its poetry and romance, and who is fully prepared not alone to admire the beauty and the grandeur of the country, but to respect and love the people. It is not my first, or even my twentieth visit; for it has been my custom from my youth upwards to take my annual holiday among the well-beloved mountains and straths, and on the winding lochs that indent in multitudinous beauty all the mazy nooks and corners of the mag-

nificent West. I know, as it were, every foot of the land and every wimple of the water; and my distinguished friend—a great soldier, a ripe scholar, and a true gentleman, whose home is on the other side of the Atlantic—thinks himself as fortunate in my companionship as I think myself in his. We have not much time to spare, so we resolve to make the most of the little; and as we cannot traverse the whole of Scotland in a month, unless we travel too rapidly for mental and physical enjoyment, I resolve (my friend acceding) to divide our Raid over the Border into three parts, and to take them leisurely. It is my fancy to lay out the portions of Scotland which we are to visit into three districts—unknown to geographical nomenclature—and to classify them under the names of the poets with whose life and works they are most intimately associated. The first is the Land of Scott, including Edinburgh and the Border, together with Glasgow and the south-western Highlands of Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine. The second is the Land of Burns, including Ayr and Dumfries, and all the lovely pastoral region over which the fame of the Ayrshire peasant hangs like a roseate cloud in the summer morning. The third and last is the Land of Ossian, a land which may be so called, whether Ossian were a real or a mythological personage; the “land of the brown heath and shaggy wood, the land of the mountain and the flood,” of the grey cairn and the windy corrie, of the mist and of the storm, the land of the true-hearted children of the Gael.

We take the steamer from London Bridge to Leith, and being blessed with unusually fine weather and an abnormally placid sea, our time goes as happily as that of Thalaba. On the second afternoon we catch sight on our left of the once neutral city of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and obtain the first glimpse of the green hills of Scotland, not yet huge enough to be dignified with the name of mountains. Passing the fishing village of Eyemouth, and the bold projecting bluffs of St. Abb's Head, we enter the Firth of Forth, and sailing within gunshot of the land, feast our eyes upon as magnificent a panorama as any traveller in search of the picturesque can desire. We have scarcely entered the Firth before reminiscences of Sir Walter Scott begin to throng upon us in rapid succession. The spirit of the great magician seems to preside over us wherever we go, and to say, “This land is mine. My genius has sanctified it.

Wherever my feet have trodden, wherever my eyes have looked, whatever my pen has described, wherever the light of my imagination has fallen upon the land or sea, all are spots that are dear to my countrymen, and shall be dear to them for ever."

Among the first of these memorable places is Fast Castle, frowning over the sea, with the distant range of the Lammermoor Hills in the background. This is the Wolf's Crag, of the painful but fascinating romance, the *Bride of Lammermoor*. Sir Walter never wholly admitted the identity of Fast Castle and Wolf's Crag, and declared that he had never seen that castle except from the sea, adding, "but fortalices of this description are found occupying, like osprey's nests, projecting rocks and promontories in many parts of the eastern coast of Scotland, and the position of Fast Castle seems certainly to resemble that of Wolf's Crag as much as any other, while its vicinity to the mountain ridge of Lammermoor renders the assimilation a perfect one." So faint a denial—like a woman's no, when uttered with a smile—may be taken as an affirmative. The Kelpie's Flow, or the quicksand on the shore, where the lordly lover sank to rise no more, leaving but the plume of his hat above the waves to tell of his tragic fate, is purely imaginary, and need not be looked for. A few miles further west we pass the town of Dunbar, famous as the place from whence, in the memorable year of the '45, Sir John Cope sent his challenge to "bonnie Prince Charlie." This challenge led to the battle of Prestonpans, and the defeat of Cope, and afforded, as all the world knows, great aid and comfort to the Jacobites.

Still skirting the coast of Haddingtonshire, and about two miles east of North Berwick, we arrive at the ruins of another fortress—the famous tower of Tantallon, once the stronghold of the great Scottish family of Douglas. It was besieged, when held by the Earl of Angus, by King James the Fifth, of erotic and romantic memory. It was in the olden time a common saying that it was as easy to make a bridge to the Bass as to "ding doon Tantallon." But Tantallon was beaten down, nevertheless, as many stronger fortresses have been. The base of the precipitous rock on which it stands is washed on three sides by the sea, and the place was so strong by nature and art that, until the invention of gunpowder, it defied all attempts at capture. Even gunpowder failed to reduce it when James besieged it, and borrowed two of the

greatest guns of the day—"thrawn (or crooked) mouthed Meg" and her "marrow," or mate, from Dunbar, for the purpose. The king, however, acquired it by the flight of the Earl of Angus and a compromise with the doughty captain at the head of the garrison. What the king failed to do in 1528 was done more than a century afterwards by the grim Covenanters, who beat down Tantallon when held for Charles the First in 1639, and left it the picturesque and desolate ruin which it still remains.

The Bass Rock has been looming grandly, though dimly, on the horizon during the last dozen miles of our course, and the sea being beautifully calm, and our captain as placid and as accommodating as the weather, we suggest that he should steam the good ship round the northern, and almost perpendicular side of the rock, instead of taking the usual southern channel. On so calm a day the deviation involves no danger; and a delay of no more than ten minutes or a quarter of an hour is of trifling account in a voyage from the Thames. To please his passengers, the captain consents to do as required, and we are rewarded by a spectacle as difficult to describe in all its beauty as it is impossible to forget. The rock, which forms an island about a mile in circumference, rises abruptly from the level of the sea to a height of about four hundred and twenty feet, but seems twice as lofty as seen from the deck of the vessel. The whole northern face of the rock is white with sea-fowl, gulls, gannet, and solangeese, who, alarmed by the appearance of our vessel, rise to the air in countless myriads, screaming and fluttering, in vain protest against our unwelcome proximity. The passengers are all more or less excited at the novel sight. They shout, they roar, they clap their hands, to alarm the birds; the steward rings the big bell, and the engineer, catching the contagion of the moment, lets off the steam at the alarm whistle, and the diabolical sound scares some thousands more of the older and more experienced birds, who had possibly treated our intrusion with philosophic indifference. "And as we glower, amazed and curious," like Tam o' Shanter, "the mirth and fun grow fast and furious;" and one frantic passenger, rushing up from below with a gun in his hand, blazes away at the birds to my intense disgust. Happily the gun is not loaded, except with powder, and the beautiful and harmless

birds are, as the French would say, "Quitte pour la peur," and whirl and scream over our heads with continually increasing vehemence. As our vessel proceeds on its course, they settle down upon their nests, and we watch them through telescopes and opera-glasses until the noble rock is left a mile in our rear. On the south-eastern slope there is a landing-place, only accessible in calm weather, whither pleasure parties from Leith and Edinburgh often resort in the summer for a wild picnic in this palace of nature.

The Bass Rock has a history of its own, and has the honour, if honour it can be called, of having been the last place within the British Isles that held out for the "lawful king" against the Revolution of 1688.* One Captain Maitland, with a garrison of fifty men in the little fortification built on the only accessible side of the rock, defended it so valiantly for nearly three years for James the Seventh of Scotland (James the Second of England), that the Scottish privy council thought it expedient to enter into negotiations for its surrender. The garrison was allowed to retire with the honours of war; the little fort was demolished, and the rock, with its pasturage of seven acres of scanty herbage, and its wild-fowl, present and to come, were bestowed by the Crown upon Sir James Dalrymple, lord-president of the Court of Session, to whose descendants it still belongs. The ruling party, whose principles sprung into the ascendant along with King William, were not sorry to destroy a fortress which had often served as a state prison for the Covenanters in the unhappy days of "the persecution." The Bass was originally the property of "the Lauders of the Bass," who retained it for upwards of four centuries. In the year 1628, the then head of the family being in great pecuniary straits, took refuge upon their all but inaccessible rock along with his mother, "Dame Isabel Lauder, Lady of the Bass," whence for many months they set their creditors and the laws of Scotland at defiance. The Lords of Council, scandalised at this contempt of court, issued a proclamation, threatening the laird and his mother with the highest pains and penalties of the law if they did not quietly surrender. Ultimately they quitted their fortress, and proceeded to Edinburgh, where they quietly arranged their debts with their creditors.

* See ALL THE YEAR ROUND, First Series, vol. xviii., p. 83.

On the mainland of Scotland, nearly opposite to the Bass, stands the picturesque conical hill, known as North Berwick Law, and close beside it the town of North Berwick, so called to distinguish it from Berwick-upon-Tweed. This little town is famed in the melancholy annals of Scottish superstition for its warlocks and witches, nine of whom were burnt alive at one time upon the Links of Leith, in the year 1644. From North Berwick, still skirting the shore into the narrowing Firth, with the county, sometimes jocularly called the kingdom of Fife, looming hazily to the north, we pass various small towns before we come fairly in sight of Arthur's Seat, with the beautiful city of Edinburgh at its base. Among these is Dirleton, with the ruins of its famous castle, besieged by King Edward the First, and afterwards the property of the luckless Earl of Gowrie, whose alleged conspiracy against King James the First puzzles posterity to this hour to decide whether it was the earl's conspiracy against the king, or the king's against the earl. After a short interval, we pass Prestonpans, famous for its excellent beer—not so potent as that of worthy Mr. Bass, but sparkling and exhilarating. My companion, with his soldierly instincts, desires particularly to have pointed out to him the site of Prince Charles's victory over General Cope, where the gallant and pious Colonel Gardiner was slain. The battle is called by the three names of Tranent Muir, Gladsmuir, and Prestonpans, the actual scene of the conflict being on the moor of Tranent. A spirited ballad was written on the Jacobite victory, by a doughty Haddingtonshire farmer of the name of Skirving, in which he distributed his praise and blame among the combatants in the most impartial manner. Among others, he accused one "Lieutenant Smith, of Irish birth," of having leaped over the head of "Major Bowle, that worthy soul," when lying wounded on the ground, and of escaping from the field, instead of rendering the assistance for which the sufferer had called. Smith being aggrieved, sent the author a challenge to meet him at Haddington.

"Na, na," said the worthy farmer, who was working in his field when the hostile message reached him, "I have no time to gang to Haddington; but tell Mr. Smith to come here, and I'll tak' a look at him. If he's a man about my ain size, I'll fecht him; but if he's muckle bigger and stronger, I'll just do as he did—I'll run awa'!"

The sun is setting in clouds of amber and

purple glory over the distant mountain tops of Dumbartonshire and Stirlingshire as we approach the pier of Leith, and setting foot on shore with our not very cumbrous impedimenta, whirl rapidly up Leith Walk into Edinburgh, the Edina of the poets, the Dunedin of the Gael, the Modern Athens, the Auld Reekie of its inhabitants, and one of the most beautiful cities in the world. We drive to comfortable and hospitable quarters at the hotel (well, I shall not name it, lest I should be accused of a puff, which my good friend, the landlord, does not need, and which no good thing or good man ever does), and sally forth next morning to survey Auld Reekie, to find it not a tenth part so reekie as London, or a fiftieth part so reekie as Manchester or Glasgow. Standing at the door of our hostelry, from the roof of which floats the royal standard of Great Britain, and another flag, that of the once royal clan Alpine, now the clan MacGregor, we look up and down Princes-street, the glory of the New Town, and one of the most picturesque streets in Europe, and across to the Old Town, separated from the New by what was once a pond or lake, and now forms the substratum of the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway. And a noble view presents itself. To the left is the Calton Hill, crowned with monuments of such illustrious Scotsmen as David Hume, Dugald Stewart, and Robert Burns, and with an unfinished Grecian monument, consisting of twelve pillars; and a little beyond, and further south, Arthur's Seat, a hill almost worthy to be called a mountain, with the steep precipices on its western face, called Salisbury Crags. To the right is the imposing rock on which stands the ancient Castle, while between it and the Calton Hill stretches the long irregular outline of the old city, with its houses of twelve and fourteen stories in height, interspersed with towers and steeples, among which are conspicuous St. Giles's, with its central tower, the top of which is encircled with open stonework in the shape of an imperial crown; the elegant spire of the Assembly Hall, and the Tron, or Market Church, and banks and public edifices innumerable.

Confining ourselves for the present to a hasty glance at the Old Town, preparatory to a study of its historical reminiscences on the spots themselves, we walk leisurely through Princes-street, which, unlike most of the streets of the world, is built but on one side—the north; having on the south

the public gardens, and deep down towards the foundations of the Castle Rock, the Edinburgh and Glasgow Railway. Here almost in the centre, and overlooking both the Old Town and the New, are the Gothic shrine and statue of Sir Walter Scott, without exception the finest and most appropriately placed public monument in Great Britain, or perhaps in the world. The other public monuments in Princes-street merit no praise for execution and design, though, possibly, much for their intention. That of Professor Wilson is squab and ungainly, and placed on too high a pedestal for proper effect; that of Allan Ramsay, whose house, just as he built it, stands a pistol-shot behind on the face of the Castle Rock, is in better taste; while that of the Duke of Wellington, in front of the Register Office, at the eastern end of the street, is simply detestable. It represents a man with a body of six feet high, and with legs in proportion to a body of nine, astride upon a heavy charger, with his hoofs in the air, supported on a crag by his tail, without which support the frightful structure would infallibly topple over on the heads of the passers-by. It has been the fate of the illustrious Wellington to be more abominably caricatured by sculptors than any other celebrity who ever lived. "Why, oh why," as Artemus Ward inquired, "should it be the penalty of greatness to be sculpted?"

Princes-street is emphatically a street of the nineteenth century; the Boulevard, the Regent-street, the Prater, the Broadway of modern Edinburgh; but the High-street of the Old Town, whither we next betake ourselves, with the Castle perched upon the Rock, at one extremity, and Holyrood Palace, nestling down among the meadows at the foot of Arthur's Seat, upon the other, is a street of three centuries ago. If Sir Walter Scott be the presiding spirit of the New, Queen Mary is the genius of the Old Town. The place is haunted by the remembrances of her beauty, her fascination, her errors, and her sorrows. Wherever we step we are reminded of her. From the oldest part of the Castle, partially built in her reign in 1565, down to Holyrood, where her luckless favourite Rizzio was brutally slain, every stone in the pavement, if it could speak, might tell a history either of her, or of the rough nobles and ambitious statesmen who made her life unhappy, and her sovereign state a sovereignty of anguish. It is said, that "a thing of beauty is a joy

for ever," but in Mary's case, the thing of beauty is a sad memory for evermore—beautiful, no doubt, as the story of her youth comes down to us, from the haze and cloud and roseate sunset of the past, but with melancholy as its all-pervading halo.

We are accompanied, as we pace up to the Castle, to start from thence on our pilgrimage to Holyrood, by a friend, who is a poet and an artist, and a prosperous citizen to boot, which not all poets and artists are, and who might be called, for his patriotism, *Scotus Scotorum*—one born in Edinburgh, and familiarly acquainted with every ancient stone and every venerable nook on all its classic ground. We soon exhaust the Castle and its treasures; see the regalia of Scotland; the crown on its cushion of crimson velvet, fringed with gold; the sceptre, the sword, the mace, and all the rest of the paraphernalia of a royalty that is not extinct, though merged in that of Great Britain; and, next of all, the little—the very little—room in which Mary gave birth to James the First of England and Sixth of Scotland. It is of irregular form, only eight feet square, overlooks the steep precipice of the Castle Rock, and is eminently suggestive of the discomfort in which our ancestors were content to live and to die. George the Fourth, when he visited Edinburgh, was particularly curious to examine this room—why, is not stated; but that the motive was poetical or romantic does not appear very likely to those who remember the King's character. We take a look at Mons Meg, a great, old-fashioned, and useless gun, which the worthy Scottish people have somehow or other taken it into their heads to regard as a kind of palladium of the liberties of Scotland, and learn that it was employed by James the Fourth at the siege of Norham Castle in 1498; that it accidentally burst in firing a salute in honour of James the Seventh in 1682; that it was removed to the Tower of London, to lie perdu in that repository of old arms and artillery, and that it remained there until 1829, when it was restored to Scotland amid the rejoicings of the Edinburgh people. The street that extends from the Castle to Holyrood—and that in different parts receives the name of the Castle Hill, the Lawnmarket, the High-street, and the Canongate, and that swarms from morn to night, and long into the night, with people who seem to have nothing to do but to lounge and gossip, or, as the Scotch say, "to crack" at corners, and with children enough to stock one of

the states of America—is richer in historical associations than any street in the world, unless some of the older streets of Paris be exceptions. All the other thoroughfares of ancient Edinburgh are but feeders to this one. There is not a solitary wynd, or close, or alley leading out of it on either side—sordid, mean, squalid, and wretchedly over-peopled, as they all are—which, could the tale of its former inhabitants be truly told, would not shine and sparkle with the names of the great, the noble, the beautiful, the learned, the wise, and the witty. Our poetical friend *Scotus* draws our attention to one of these wynds or closes—a narrow alley, which the outstretched hands of a man could touch simultaneously on both sides—and informs us that in early boyhood he used to spit down it in passing, to show his contempt; and that he registered a vow never to pass down it as long as he lived—a vow which to this time he has religiously kept. I ask him why? "It is Monteith's Close," he replies; "so called from the name of the wretch who betrayed Wallace! There is pollution in the very remembrance of such a scoundrel." I know my friend *Scotus* well enough to be convinced that he will keep his juvenile vow: and that his veneration for Wallace, and his hatred of Monteith, are realities, and not shams affected for the occasion.

Descending the Castle Hill to the Lawnmarket, I strive to recal to mind what brilliant and gorgeous, and what tragic processions have passed over these stones from the early days of the Stuarts until our own. And first of all there flits over my waking fancy that procession of ghosts, all clad in the semblance of mail, "in their habit as they lived," like Hamlet's father, who gathered at the cross (the ancient site of which we are now passing) on the eve of the fatal battle of Flodden, and I recal the lines which they chanted in the pale moonlight:

Dim the night, but dark the morrow,
Long shall last the coming sorrow,
Woe to Scotland, woe!

This procession was but a dream of the excited popular imagination of the time, although to my remembrance it wears the guise of a fact; like all great fictions that are narrated by true poets and romancers. Falstaff, who may never have lived at all, is as real as any actual personage of the days of Queen Elizabeth, and Lady Macbeth is as indubitable a reality as Mrs. Manning. The other historical processions that might

be cited, as having strutted their hour upon the great stage of the High-street of Dunedin, are realities in a double sense; real in their own day, realised in ours in the pages of history and romance. They are all of the most various character; a phantasmagoria of coronations, royal marriages, and proclamations of victory, intermixed with a rabble rout, following to the headsman's block the ambitious nobles who had fallen into disfavour, the old crones accused of witchcraft, the saints and martyrs of the Covenant, and all the chivalrous and unfortunate heroes of the rebellions of '15 and '45. And over and amid them all are Queen Mary and her court, her lovers and her husbands, all alike false, or mad, or silly, or simply luckless and unfortunate. And whatever may be said of the crimes or misfortunes of the people in this crowded historical gallery, let none say a word against Queen Mary in Edinburgh. It is not irrelevant to inquire, why so staunchly Protestant a nation as the Scotch should look so tenderly upon their Popish queen; and why so godly a people should condone so readily, even so affectionately, the errors of her life and reign? The Stuarts were not a blessing to their native land, but very much the reverse. Time, however, has worked in their behalf, and the lapse of ages, which has weakened the remembrance of their faults, has strengthened the remembrance of their misfortunes, and almost displaced blame by sympathy and pity.

For Sorrow is a great and holy thing,
We recognise its right, as king to king.

"Whatever the politician, the philosopher, and the lover of liberty may say of this unhappy family," says the editor of the *Jacobite Relics* of Scotland, "no lover of poetry and music can speak of them without affectionate regret, and the respect which is due to misfortune. Death from the daggers of assassins; death upon the scaffold; public shame and contumely; poverty, misery, banishment—all these were the appanage and inheritance of this illustrious race; a race whom Fortune seemed to delight in persecuting and humiliating, to whom she gave amiability only to bring them into sorrow, and make them acquainted with false friends, unwise advisers, and treacherous confidants; to whom she offered the cup of prosperity only to infuse gall and wormwood into it, or dash it untasted from their lips; to whom she gave wealth only to take it away; power, only to make it a mockery and a disgrace; talents, only to lead them astray from the right path; and to whom even the gift of personal

beauty, as in the case of Mary Queen of Scots, was but the means and the consummation of all other trial, calamity, and shame."

On the right, as we descend towards Holyrood, stand Parliament-square and the former parliament house, now used as the College of Justice, or Law Courts of Scotland. The history of this edifice as a parliament house closed at the Union; its history as the centre of Scottish law and equity will doubtless extend far into the future. Let the lover of rare books and manuscripts, if he have the time to spare, turn into a portion of this building, the Advocate's Library, the largest collection of books in Scotland, which, like the British Museum, enjoys the privilege of receiving, and in case of need of exacting, a copy of every new book or pamphlet published within the United Kingdom. The library of the Writers to the Signet close adjoining is not quite so extensive, but is as well worth a visit.

St. Giles's Church—one of the few architectural remnants of Roman Catholic Scotland which has not been devastated and overthrown by the rude hands of the intolerant fanatics who hated the shrine as much as they hated the faith—is an interesting edifice, of which the origin is lost in antiquity. It existed in the fourteenth century, but how much earlier it is difficult or impossible to ascertain. It was once provided with thirty-six altars, and maintained upwards of a hundred priests and other officials. It is now divided into four compartments, with separate entrances, each serving as a parish church. Here John Knox, whose house is still to be seen a little lower down the street, was accustomed to thunder against Queen Mary. From this point to Holyrood there is scarcely a house that has not some historical, traditional, legendary, poetical, or social interest attaching to it, as may be seen in the *Traditions of Edinburgh*, collected by Mr. Robert Chambers. But dirtier and more squalid grows the street as we descend into the Cowgate and the Canongate, more multitudinous the children, more slouchy and devil-may-care the men, more untidy and reckless-looking the women; more grimy the windows and passages, more forlorn and petty the shops; facts which, while we observe with regret, our friend Scotus takes care to explain by the statement that nine-tenths of the population hereabouts are Irish of the lowest class, both in means and morals, and a sore trouble to the police and the magis-

tracy. "Once," says Mr. Chambers, "this was the court end of the town, and occupied by persons of distinction. It is now abandoned to the meanest of the mean; several of the houses are dilapidated, and the street flutters in rags and wretchedness." At the foot of a wretched wynd, now happily demolished, stood the palace of Cardinal Beaton, once the temporary residence of James the Fifth. Moray House, the palace of the famous Regent of Scotland, is still standing, and is used as a training college for teachers of the Free Church. Further down the street is Queensberry House, formerly the town residence of the dukes with that title, and now a house of refuge for the destitute poor, who, however destitute they may be on the "Sabbath," are warned by a notification on the gate not to expect relief upon that day.

At the foot of the Canongate, which through its whole course suggests to the visitor the saying of the Scotsman who returned to his native country after a long absence in India, "Ah, Edinburgh, I smell ye noo!" we enter the precincts of Holyrood, or the Holy Cross. A mournful palace it is. The ghost of David Rizzio seems to haunt the whole place, even although the greater portion of the building was erected long after his murder, and long after poor Queen Mary had ceased to inhabit it. Cromwell battered down a great portion of the building. It was restored in harmony with the original design in the reign of Charles the Second. The old portion which Mary inhabited still excites the greatest interest among visitors, and the supposed blood-stains in the little chamber where the savage Scotch lords, with the queen's husband at their head, coming up by a secret stair, slew the poor Italian while clinging abjectly to his mistress's robes for protection, are among the first objects which every stranger hastens to see. In fact, there is little in Holyrood of any interest whatever except those portions of the building which are associated with Queen Mary's history. This and an adjoining room contain some undoubted relics of the unhappy lady, and some pieces of mouldering tapestry wrought by her own hands. The antique bedsteads and furniture, shown as having belonged to her, are generally believed to be spurious. Cold must be the heart and uninformed the intellect of either man or woman who can visit these sad chambers without melancholy reflections on the old, yet ever new, subject—the instability of human greatness and the sole sufficiency of virtue to produce happiness.

In a long disproportioned apartment in the palace, which is dignified with the name of a picture gallery, the Scottish peers assemble to elect to each British parliament sixteen of their number to represent them in the House of Lords. Many, however, of the Scottish peers of the highest rank are English peers also, such as the Dukes of Sutherland, Buccleuch, Argyll, Montrose, Hamilton, and others. This gallery contains what are called the "portraits" of a hundred and sixteen kings of Scotland, including Old King Cole, or "Coil," Macbeth, Duncan, and scores of others who probably never had any real existence. These daubs, for the greater portion of them are little better, all appear to be the result of the not very praiseworthy industry of one workman. In the earlier portraits of the traditionary monarchs it is palpable that he must have drawn upon his imagination for his likenesses. The later portraits, from the first of the Stuarts downwards, are as authentic as the artist's skill in copying could make them.

Holyrood Palace is still nominally a royal residence, and Queen Victoria occasionally resided there, on her visits to Scotland, in those comparatively early days, when the railway system was not completed far enough towards Balmoral to enable the journey from London to be comfortably made within the twenty-four hours. After the French Revolution of 1830, when Charles the Tenth, the Charles le Simple of the poet Béranger, slunk out of his throne, as Louis Philippe did eighteen years afterwards, apartments in Holyrood Palace were placed at his disposal by the more fortunate monarch of Great Britain.

Adjoining the palace are the ruins of the Abbey, once, next to Melrose and Elgin, the most splendid structure of its kind in Scotland, and that, even in dilapidation, shows how beautiful it must have been when it stood perfect, as it came from the hands of the builders. Within its precincts the members of the royal house of Stuart were formerly buried, and many of the ancient Scottish families still enjoy and claim the privilege of sepulture within its walls.

BY THE MERE.

GREY, dimly outlined 'neath the sullen skies,
Lies the half-frozen mere, its silver face
Veiled by the wintry gloaming: silent voiced,
Cold, calm, and still as soft sweet maiden sleeps,
A dreamless slumber, in her virgin shroud.

The alder boughs are fringed with diamond drops,
Rich pendent sparks that in the gloaming glint,
And glow, and glitter with a thousand fires,
Nature's unsullied gems, chaste icicles.

The heavy clouds enwrapped in leaden gloom,
Grow thick with gathering snow. The sobbing wind,
In low dull angry murmurs o'er the fens,
Brushes their reedy armies, whilst the boom
Of the lone bittern, hermit of the waste,
Sounds o'er the marsh, as sounds the knell of doom.

The purple-crested mallard, from the sedge,
Whirls whirling upward, with a clarion shrill,
That bodes his quick alarm: the snow flakes fall,
Fall thick and fast: and fast and faster still,
Comes onward black-robed night: the landscape pales,
The last faint gleams of twilight die away,
A death-like stillness falls upon the fens
And all is silent, as the reign of Death.

A SIEGE OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

GIBRALTAR first became ours in 1704, when it was wrested from the Spaniards by Admiral Rooke, who had been sent into the Mediterranean with a fleet to assist Charles, Archduke of Austria, in obtaining the throne of Spain. In the autumn of the same year the Rock was all but retaken from us by escalade, and early the next year the French and Spaniards besieged it in form, but eventually retired, after losing nearly ten thousand men from our fire and from sickness. The enemy attacked it again in 1726, and continued the siege till they lost nearly three thousand men.

In 1779, Spain seeing England embarrassed with a French and an American war, seized the opportunity to have another grapple for the Pillar of Hercules which she had lost, and made a secret peace with the Emperor of Morocco to induce him to stop supplies to Gibraltar from the ports of Tetuan and Tangiers. General Eliott, a staunch old officer, was at that time governor of the Rock, having with him five thousand three hundred and eighty-two English and Hanoverian troops, to face the thirty-three thousand and thirty-eight French and Spaniards already scowling at us from the front of St. Roque. The governor, prudent and alert, instantly began to collect hogsheads full of earth to strengthen the fortifications, and set to work five hundred Jews and Genoese to level the sand-heaps near the gardens in the Neutral Ground, so that the enemy, when advancing, should find no shelter from our lower batteries. The artillerymen in garrison being insufficient, one hundred and eighty soldiers of the line were selected to learn great gun practice. On the 16th of July the Spaniards blockaded the port with a squadron; two seventy-fours, two frigates, five xebecs, and a number of galleys and armed settees

also anchored in the bay off Algeziras, and kept up a vigilant blockade. The governor sent men along the cliff to collect shrubs for fascines, and began some interesting experiments with red-hot shot, which "roast potatoes," as the men called them, proved afterwards most efficacious against the enemy. On the 12th of September, to interrupt the incessant cart-loads of shot and fascines coming to the enemy's lines, the governor ordered the Green's Lodge, Willis, and Queen Charlotte batteries to open fire on the five hundred Spanish workmen who were filling up with sand the northern ditch of Fort St. Philip. This frightened the custom-house men and advanced guards out of their huts and storehouses, the covered waggons were driven off, and the cavalry fled to the camp in panic, but the Spaniards were at "too great a distance," nearly a mile (what would the defenders of Gibraltar have said to cannon that carry six miles?), and the shells sank so deep in the sand that few splinters rose to the surface. To protect "Gib" as much as possible from the coming bombardment, the pavement of the north part of the town was ploughed up, towers of conspicuous buildings were taken down, and traverses raised in different places to protect the communications. The engineers, determining to mount a gun on the very summit of the northern front of the Rock, the artillerymen, too impatient to wait for a road being cut, dragged a seventy-four pounder up the steep crag with great difficulty and after prodigious exertions, and saluted the enemy's forts. From this "Rock Gun," as it was called, the men had with glasses a bird's-eye view of the enemy's whole lines. At daybreak on the 20th of October, the garrison of "Gib" saw, to their surprise, thirty-five embrasures cut through the parapet of the Spanish lines, the workmen having now completed three batteries. By November provisions grew very scarce in the garrison, mutton being three shillings and sixpence a pound, ducks from fourteen to eighteen shillings a couple, and a goose, a guinea. The governor, an abstemious man, who seldom tasted anything but vegetables, puddings, and water, as an experiment of what food would be requisite lived for eight days on four ounces of rice a day.

On the night of the 11th of November, two men of the Walloon guards coming in as deserters, were the next morning taken to Willis's battery, to there describe the enemy's works to the governor. On the

14th of December a Spanish soldier, trying to come over to the English, was pursued by two troopers, cut down, and secured, in spite of one of the pursuer's horses being killed by our fire. The next day the deserter was hung near the Spanish artillery park, and his body exposed till sunset. In January, 1780, the garrison began to be hard driven for food. Many of the poorer classes now lived on thistles, dandelions, and wild leeks, and the women, children, and infirm persons were often jostled out of their allowance by the mobs who assembled daily at the bakers' doors. But all this distress was relieved at the end of January by the arrival of Admiral Rodney, with a fleet of twenty-one sail of the line and a large convoy of merchant vessels. He was in high spirits, having just captured six armed Spanish vessels and a fleet of fifteen merchantmen, belonging to the Caracca Company, going from Bilbao to Cadiz. Rodney's fleet took back with it to England all the soldiers' wives and children who were not provided with the provisions required for twelve months—that is, two hundred and fifty pounds of flour, or three hundred and sixty pounds of biscuits. From the Spanish prizes the governor purchased a great number of heavy guns and some hundred barrels of powder, notwithstanding the supply brought by the convoy. The garrison now was in a good state of defence, the stores and magazines being full, and the soldiers confident that they were not forgotten in England. The salt fish, however, and the insufficient vegetables soon gave rise to a great deal of scurvy, which became very fatal.

On the 7th of June, six Spanish fire-ships bore down on the two English men-of-war and the ordnance ships in the New Mole; but our sailors instantly commencing a brisk cannonade to retard the fire-ships, manned their boats and grappled bravely with the burning vessels, towed them under the walls, where they were one by one extinguished. Though several of the fire-ships were bound together with chains and cables, our sailors separated them and towed them to land without losing a man.

At this very time, when scurvy was making great ravages, and many of the soldiers, rather than yield to the disease, were limping to their duty on crutches, our ships' boats cut off a Danish dogger from a Dutch convoy that was passing, and its cargo of lemons and oranges from Malaga was devoured with avidity by the sick, who in a few days began to recover. The Spanish

gunboats preventing all communication with Barbary, the garrison now trusted chiefly for wine, spirits, sugar, and occasional live stock, to the small boats from Minorca, which were very daring and successful in running the blockade. On the 12th of November an English privateer, called the Young Sabine, after beating off several armed Spanish vessels and three gunboats, put in with a cargo of cheese, hams, and potatoes; the latter sold at forty-three dollars (seven pounds ten shillings and sixpence) the hundredweight. Two days after, the enemy mounted twelve guns en barbette, near Fort St. Philip—in the Black Battery, as it was called by the garrison. Though the most distant from the Rock, this battery proved throughout the whole siege the most vexatious, as its line of fire enfiladed the town wall and main street, the principal communication with the northern part of the fortress. As the Spanish gunboats seemed directed in their firing at night by the lights in the houses along the sea-wall, no lights were henceforward allowed after seven o'clock p.m. in any window looking towards the bay.

Provisions were now getting seriously deficient on the Rock; the poorer soldiers, who were unable to purchase from the Minorca vessels, were in intolerable distress, even biscuit crumbs selling for a shilling per pound, while the common soldiers received only five pounds and a quarter of bread a week, thirteen ounces of salt beef, eighteen ounces of half putrid beef, and two and a half ounces of rancid congealed oil, which was called butter. On the 3rd of April, to the infinite joy of the whole garrison, the enemy began to make some uneasy movements in the batteries round the bay, and a British cutter arriving in twenty-nine days from Plymouth, announced that a grand fleet, under charge of Admiral Derby, was coming to the relief of Gibraltar. At daybreak on the 13th, a thick mist rose in the Gut, and the sun shone full on the fair and welcome sight of a convoy of one hundred vessels, led by several stately men-of-war. As they entered the bay fifteen Spanish gunboats advanced in regular order from Algeziras, and seconded by the guns and mortar batteries on land, opened a smart cannonade on the fleet; but they fled at the approach of a line-of-battle ship and two of our frigates, which might have then entirely destroyed these afterwards harassing small fry. The moment the convoy came to an

anchor off the New Mole, one hundred and fourteen pieces of heavy metal, chiefly twenty-six pounders and thirteen-inch mortars, opened on the garrison. The frightened inhabitants instantly flocked in the most pitiable confusion to the south end of the Rock, leaving all their property to the mercy of the soldiers. During the cannonade several houses were burnt, and on the third day's bombardment the soldiers began to plunder the wine-shops, and gave way to great excesses in their rage at the liquor dealers, who had greatly raised their prices, and had concealed their stores. Some of the men conveyed spirits to their own haunts, and there barricading themselves, regardless of punishment, drank themselves to death. In one instance a party of soldiers roasted a pig with a fire made of cinnamon. The stores in the Spanish church having been set on fire, the flour-casks were removed to the King's Bastion, and piled as temporary shelter before the doors of the southern casemates, where many people had been killed or wounded in bed. The men, however, when the spoils of the town grew scarcer, made prizes of all barrels pierced by the enemy's shot, and scooped out the flour for pancakes, which they were very expert at making. Our batteries having become quite ruinous by their incessant firing, and the town nearly demolished, men were sent up on the terraces with sand-bags to repair them, and also to make higher, stronger, and more numerous protecting traverses.

The fleet had begun to move, the admiral fearing to lose the easterly wind; the colliers were therefore sunk, to be unloaded at leisure. Much merchandise brought for the garrison was taken back, the merchants refusing to receive it on account of the bombardment. On the night of the 20th the town was set on fire in four different places; but as the public stores remained safe, no attempts were made to extinguish the flames. On the 21st, the enemy fired forty-two rounds in two minutes, and the garrison flag had to be nailed to the stump of its shattered staff. On the 24th a shell fell at the door of a casemate under the south flank of the King's Bastion, and wounded four men. The garrison orders now were that any soldier found drunk or asleep on his post, or caught marauding, should be immediately executed, and on the 30th a Hanoverian was shot by a sentry for stealing, and another soldier thief hung on the Grand Parade at the door of the store he

had plundered. About this time four frigates and a sloop brought in twenty victualling vessels with provisions purchased by the governor at Minorca.

On the 9th of May, Lieutenant Lowe, of the Twelfth Regiment, while superintending the working parties on the slope of the hill under the castle, lost his leg by a shot. He saw the shot coming, but was fascinated to the spot till it struck him. It often happened during the siege that a soldier saw a shell coming, and even cried for help, yet could not move till the shell struck the ground. Then he instantaneously recovered, ran, and often escaped before it burst. The houses in the town being now mere wrecks, the governor generally spent the day with his suite in a large tent pitched on rising ground south of the Red Sands; but the lieutenant-governor resided in the bomb-proof in the King's Bastion, to be near the centre of danger. The enemy fired about one thousand rounds in the twenty-four hours. On the 25th, the gun and mortar boats at night were unusually active. A shell fell on a house in Hardytown, and killed a respectable Jew, a female relation of his, and a clerk. Another fell into a house in which were fifteen persons, and only a child perished. A soldier of the Seventy-second was killed in bed by a shot, and so was a Jew butcher. In all, seven were killed, and twelve or thirteen were wounded. The soldiers were very discontented at having to bear all this silently—the orders being that the gunboats were not to be fired upon till they were within grape-shot distance—and the governor at last gave them leave to return the next fire.

On the morning of the 3rd of June, a corporal going with the relief to Landport, had the muzzle of his fire-lock closed and the barrel twisted like a French horn by a shell, which, however, did the man no personal injury. The 4th of June being the king's birthday, the governor commemorated the event by saluting the enemy with twenty-three cannon and forty-three mortars. A few days after the enemy celebrated Corpus Christi day with similar volleys. The visits of the gunboats after midnight had gradually become intensely vexatious, as the boats were too small to be easily hit. Our soldiers were instantly on these occasions ordered under cover, while the inhabitants fled nearly naked to any remote part of the walls. No one could ever be sure of a night's repose. Though the enemy's bombardment now seldom exceeded four hundred and fifty rounds in

the twenty-four hours, yet Willis's battery was much injured. The Spanish shot had pierced seven solid feet of sand-bag work. Strong wooden frames were therefore substituted, rammed with clay, and covered in front and on the top with junk cut in lengths.

The garrison being worn out with the incessant harassing night attacks of the gunboats, the governor determined to give them a check by sinking guns in the sand behind the Old Mole. This fire tormented their camp, and some brigs, cut down to praams, each to carry four or five heavy cannon, were moored between the New Mole and Ragged Staff, to keep the boats at a distance. The Spanish firing was now confined to the night, and unless the garrison provoked it, scarcely ever exceeded thirty rounds. On the 4th of August two men of the Fifty-eighth had a narrow escape. They were asleep in a tent behind General La Motte's quarters at the southward, when a shell fell between them. They did not wake, but a sergeant in an adjacent tent, who had run away, thinking the shell had fallen blind, returned to their tent to wake them. While they stood there discussing their narrow escape, the shell exploded, and drove them with great violence against a garden wall; the tent and everything in it was destroyed, but they were unhurt.

On the morning of the 7th of August, the haze dispelling, showed an English sloop of war becalmed, and Spanish gunboats advancing from Algeziras to intercept her. Although cannonaded by all these boats she beat them off, and eventually got under our guns, much cut about, but with a loss of only one killed and two wounded. On the 25th of August, a soldier of the Seventy-third, pinched by hunger after five days' hiding, made a bold attempt to escape. Stuffing a sand-bag with grass he came to Landport, and placing the bag on the spikes of the palisades, jumped unhurt on the glacis, then running like lightning over the causeway, cleared Bay-side barrier, escaping many hundred bullets. This was the fourth man who had deserted in six weeks. On the 27th a wounded sailor in the hospital was killed by a shell. The poor fellow had previously broken his thigh, and having had a relapse from a fall, was in bed when a shell from a Spanish mortar-boat fell into the ward, and rebounding, lodged on him. The other convalescents and sick summoned strength to crawl out of the room on their hands and knees, but the

wretched sailor was kept down by the weight of the shell, which presently burst and blew off both his legs. What was most terrible, the poor fellow survived the explosion, and was sensible to the last, loudly wishing he had been killed at the batteries. A few days later a shell from the lines fell upon the Rock above the Red Sands, and glancing off dropped to the bottom of the Prince of Wales's lines, where it burst on the platform of one of the thirty-two pounders, and a splinter hitting the apron of the gun, fired it off. The shot then took away the railing at the foot of the glacis, and lodged in the line wall near Ragged Staff. A shot that fell in an embrasure killed one of the Seventy-third, and wounded another man. The latter was struck down by the wind of the shell, which then bursting, fractured his skull, broke his left arm in two places, shattered one of his legs, tore off part of his right hand, and burned and marked his whole body with gunpowder. The surgeons, in despair, and not knowing where to begin, trepanned him that day, and two days later amputated his leg; yet having a wonderful constitution, this man of iron was completely cured in eleven weeks, and lived long to enjoy his magnificent pension of ninepence a day. In the evening of the 18th of August, a shell dropped into a house opposite the King's Bastion, where Major Burke and two other officers were sitting. The shell took off Major Burke's thigh, then fell through the floor into the cellar, where it burst, forcing the floor with the major up to the ceiling. The major died soon after he was operated upon. The enemy now fired eight hundred rounds in the twenty-four hours, and our men were oftener hit, for they had grown so reckless as scarcely to regard the shot during working, and it was almost necessary for the officers to caution them, even if a shell fell at their feet. The soldiers were also taught how to apply the tourniquet, as wounded men had sometimes bled to death before they could be carried to the hospital.

The enemy's works getting nearer to the Rock, and their fire waxing warmer, the governor, hearing from deserters that the Spaniards were lulled into security by their superiority of forces, resolved on a resolute night sortie. When the gates were shut after first gun-fire on the 26th of November, 1781, men were told off to meet on the Red Sands at midnight with devils, fire-fagots, and working implements, to destroy the nearest Spanish batteries. Each man

carried thirty-six rounds of ammunition, with a good flint in his piece, and one in his pocket. The Thirty-ninth and Fifty-eighth Regiments, under Brigadier-General Picton, were drawn up on the Grand Parade to assist the sortie if necessary. The enemy, surprised, almost instantly abandoned the works that had cost them so much expense, and employed them so many months. The works were soon alight, and the magazines blew up with tremendous explosion, just as our men passed back into their own batteries. Although these works were nearly a mile from Gibraltar, and close to the camp, mounting one hundred and thirty-five pieces of heavy artillery, the English lost only four men, and twenty-four wounded. They spiked ten mortars and eighteen twenty-six pounders, and took two Spanish officers and sixteen privates prisoners.

On the 24th of February, 1782, a shot came through one of the capped embrasures on Princess Amelia's battery, and took off the legs of two men of the Seventy-third, and one leg of another soldier, wounding a fourth man in both legs. A boy, whose sight was so quick and sure, that he could see the enemy's shot almost immediately it quitted the gun, had just reproved the working party for disregarding his warnings, and had warned them of the coming missile. At the end of May five thousand more troops arrived in the Spanish lines, and on the 17th of June a French convoy of sixty transports, under three frigates, arrived with several thousand men from Minorca, which they had just captured. The Duc de Crillon now took the command, assisted by M. d'Arçon, a celebrated engineer, and Admiral Moreno, who had lately invented a plan of rendering the battering ships of his most Catholic majesty bomb-proof and incombustible. These vessels were covered six or seven feet thick with green timber, bolted with iron, cork, junk, and raw hides; the boats were to have mantlets to let down and facilitate the landing of troops. General Elliott, relying on his little army that had already done so much, was busy as ever. Sergeants, musicians, everybody now had to carry the musket. On the 8th of July, as an artilleryman was in the laboratory filling shells, and driving fuses, one of them, by some unaccountable accident, took fire. Although surrounded by powder, the brave fellow instantly carried out the lighted shell and threw it where it could explode safely. Two seconds more and it burst. If the labor-

atory had gone, the loss would have been irreparable, the fortifications would have suffered, and many lives have been lost. Forges for heating shot were now distributed in different batteries, and the engineers began to work out a covered battery in the upper rock, which subsequently grew into St. George's Hall, one of the lions of modern Gib.

The enemy grew very active on the night of the 15th of August; ten thousand men raising, unknown to the garrison, an epaulement five hundred yards long, in which one million six hundred thousand sand-bags were used. On the 19th, the Duc de Crillon sent the governor a present of vegetables, game, and rice, which the governor reluctantly accepted, hating, like a good bluff Englishman, all such ill-timed affectations of courtesy. The crisis was coming. Enraged at the garrison guns setting a battery on fire, and afraid of a renewal of sorties, the duke opened the ball. At daybreak on the 9th of September, one hundred and seventy pieces of ordnance vomited fire at the north of the Rock; at the same time nine line-of-battle ships got under way from the Orange Grove, and blazed at the sea line; while fifteen gun and mortar boats also added to the annoyance.

The next day the enemy's fleet of seven three-deckers and thirty-one smaller ships, beside xebecs and bomb-ketches, anchored in the bay. On the land side, forty thousand men were thirsting for English blood, while two hundred cannon scowled at the tough old Rock, now illuminated by a volcano of incessant flame. On the 19th of September the battering ships took up their position, and opened fire. In spite of our steady use of red-hot shot, the battering ships at first seemed invulnerable. The heaviest shells rebounded from their tops, and thirty-two-pound shot fell harmless from their hulls. Occasionally a fire broke out, but the Spaniards instantly extinguished it. About noon, however, some impression was made, for their flag-ship and another vessel began to smoke, then gradually their firing slackened, rockets were sent up to summon boats to their help, and there arose an indistinct clamour of cries and groans. A little before midnight the wreck of a launch floated in under the town wall, with only twelve men saved out of a crew of three score. An hour after midnight two ships were ablaze, and between three and four o'clock six more. Our boats then captured some

launches, and rescued some of the crews of the burning vessels. An hour later two more of the Spanish ships blew up, and our boats being in danger then had to return, having bravely rescued three hundred and fifty-seven Spaniards, who were at first afraid to surrender to us. Many of the prisoners were dreadfully wounded. The enemy lost about two thousand men, including prisoners. The English, after all these storms of fire, which they returned with eight thousand three hundred rounds, lost only thirteen men and sixty-eight wounded. Pleased with his red-hot shot, the governor after this erected kilns in various parts of the garrison, which were large enough to heat one hundred balls in an hour and a quarter. Before this the "roast potatoes" were cooked in movable grates, or in bonfires at the corners of old houses near the batteries. The enemy now fired about five hundred shells and six hundred shot in the twenty-four hours.

In October news came that Lord Howe was at hand with thirty-four sail of the line and a reinforcement of sixteen hundred men for the garrison; but he failed to get in, and was followed by the Spanish fleet, which he considerably punished. The enemy after this did but little more mischief, except now and then with the gunboats.

On the 2nd of February, 1783, the Duc de Crillon informed the governor that peace had at last been signed between Great Britain, France, and Spain. The Spaniards who brought the news cried out in a transport of joy, "We are all friends!" When the Duc de Crillon came to see Gib, and was shown over the Rock galleries and covered batteries, he exclaimed, "These works are worthy of the Romans!"

On the 23rd of April, St. George's Day, the sturdy old governor (whom Reynolds afterwards painted grasping the large keys of Gibraltar) was invested with the Order of the Bath, in a colonnade erected on the rampart of the King's Bastion. He was at once raised to the peerage as Lord Heathfield; and he died soon after of paralysis at Aix-la-Chapelle.

Thus ended this stubborn siege of three years seven months and twelve days. It will hardly be believed that after firing two hundred and fifty-eight thousand three hundred and eighty-seven shot and shell, the Spaniards only killed three hundred and thirty-three of our men, and disabled one hundred and thirty-eight. Poor Paris may take some small comfort from this fact,

which seems to prove that bombardments (at least of old) frightened more than they hurt.

CONFESSIONS OF A DREAMER.

I NEVER attained the condition of that strange man, described by Lord Lytton, in his *Pilgrims of the Rhine*, who so connected his successive dreams, that they formed one continuous life, to him more valuable than the life of his waking hours, the fragments of which appeared to be so many unwelcome interruptions; but I have a notion that my own dreams are not quite as those of other people. I do not profess a shadow of belief in the prophetic value of our nocturnal visions, but to me mine are very important, inasmuch as they occupy a large portion of my time. I cannot say with Hamlet, "to sleep, perchance to dream," for with me there is no chance in the matter. Sleeping without dreaming is to me a thing unknown.

One of the peculiarities of my dreams is, that I am never absorbed in them entirely. I never lose the conviction that I am dreaming, and whatever visionary troubles befall me, I know that they will come to a speedy end—a comfortable assurance, since my dreams are almost invariably bad. If I am hotly pursued by a wild beast or an irresistible foe, I throw myself, as I suppose, on the ground, and covering my face with my hands, by a violent action of the will, force myself into wakefulness.

I will give a curious instance of my peculiarity in this respect. In the course of one of my dreams, I was brought as a captive into the presence of some Algerian despot, who sat on a throne, with a numerous body of soldiers on each side of him, and who menaced me with horrible tortures. I listened patiently, and when his discourse was ended, I said with perfect calmness:

"This is very well now; but you are perfectly aware, that when I open my eyes, you and your soldiers will all go to the—"

Evidently the nail had been hit on the head. The soldiers nudged each other, and uneasily exchanged significant winks, indicating that I had discovered the secret of their nothingness. The sultan or dey (whichever he was) looked crestfallen, but put on as good a face as he could, and said, with evident reluctance:

"Well, you may go."

I left the spot with the utmost insolence, snapping my fingers at the soldiers, who, as I passed them, stared at me with the most intense expression of awe. Soon afterwards I woke.

This dream illustrates a mental condition diametrically opposite to that of Lord Lytton's enthusiast, but in some particulars I resemble him. I have a memory that extends from one dream to another, and, skipping over the events of the actual world, recognises places seen only in preceding visions. Thus I am cognisant of a region between Fleet-street and Holborn that is totally distinct from Gough-square and its vicinity. I see it from the tops of houses, along which I walk in perfect security, and it is generally inhabited by foul, slimy animals of the dog kind, battenning upon heaps of offal. Certain I am that one of these creatures will eventually reach me, and bite my hand, remaining, perhaps, suspended when I raise my arm. The pain of the bite is not very acute, and sometimes I consent to endure it for a few seconds. When the situation becomes intolerable, I force myself, in the manner I have said, into wakefulness.

I am also familiar with a museum of sculpture, which I call the British Museum, though it bears no resemblance to the edifice in Great Russell-street. The statues, situated on a very high floor, generally represent gigantic horses, and stamp their hoofs while I gaze at them alone. I know, too, a large white house in the vicinity of an imaginary Camberwell, with a lawn in front of it, and a very spacious hall. It is evidently intended as a place of amusement, and the hall would serve admirably for balls or concerts on the largest scale. But no amusement ever takes place, and I walk through it alone, feeling that I am in a ghostly presence. Less familiar is a piece of artificial water, so transparent that I can see hideous river gods at the bottom, and so shallow, that I feel that if I attempt to swim they will clutch me with their huge damp hands.

From my childhood I have felt, even in waking hours, a strange horror at a single figure spouting water in the midst of a dark pond. I had a mysterious dread of a bronze Triton which used to stand, and may be still standing, on a terrace in the Kent-road, near the Elephant and Castle, and of the mermaid, now destroyed, which was prominent in Camberwell-grove, before the house which once belonged to the celebrated Doctor Lettsom, and which some connect with the story of George Barn-

well. The persuasion never left me that if I leaped into the water they would suck me into their tubes, and that I should be horribly crushed.

A very singular instance of dreamy memory occurred to me the other night. I should tell you that, in my dreams, my powers of locomotion are preternaturally great. I can leap from any height, without fear and without peril; and I have a talent for descending a staircase by placing my feet on the edge of the topmost stair, and then rapidly gliding from edge to edge, till I reach the bottom. These powers are not unfrequently checked by the nightmare, with which I am terribly intimate in all its horrid forms. Sometimes my legs grow so heavy that I cannot walk, save by lifting them with my hands; sometimes I have to ascend the spiral steps of a column, which narrows and threatens to hold me fast; sometimes I lose the use of my voice. And whenever these accidents occur I am in a position of imminent danger, and need the full use of my faculties.

Now, dreaming the other night, I found myself in an upper room, where I was convinced an effort would be made to detain me against my will. Rushing out, I made my way down to the street-door, taking a whole flight of stairs at every single leap. The handle of the door resisted me, and at first I had a difficulty in moving it; but I ultimately triumphed, and, again at a single leap, cleared the outside steps. Soon I found myself on an embankment by the river, close to a cab-stand. I called for a vehicle to conduct me to one of the West-end hotels; but the cabs were all occupied, and from one of them a drunken-looking man-about-town "chaffed" me as I passed. As the darkness increased I was aware of the approach of a drove of bullocks, and as the river was on one side and the cab-stand on the other, I felt that I must force my way through this unwieldy crowd. With some difficulty I elbowed myself into the midst of it, till a human agent in my rear, hitherto unnoticed, pressed me against a colossal animal, which rendered further passage impossible. In my despair I awoke, and, changing from a state of terror into an idyllic mood, I fell into a pleasing remembrance of the days when I paid my addresses to a young lady resident in that Albany-road which leads to the Bricklayers' Arms. I recalled pleasant visits in the morning, pleasant visits in the evening; and I puzzled my brain to discover under what circumstances an affair

so agreeable was suddenly broken off. Also I was doubtful as to what exact period of my life the interesting episode belonged. However, as I thought on, and more perfectly recovered the condition of wakefulness, it turned out that no such person as the lady of the Albany-road had ever existed. Now the question is, whether she was the figure in a dream of several years ago, or whether, in a state of "doze," I dreamed a memory of something that had never been present even to my imagination. The total want of connexion between the conflict with the bullocks and the pacific idyll, by which it was immediately followed, is worthy of observation.

The expedient of throwing myself on my face to escape from impending horrors, sometimes fails in an extraordinary manner. By sheer force of will I indeed destroy the vision, and find myself apparently awake in my bed. But the chamber, though exactly like that which I actually occupy, is another dream, from which I must awake anew, and which is probably peopled with forms more terrible than those which I have annihilated, because they more closely approach reality. Once I experienced a singular pause on the boundary line which parts the visionary from the actual. I dreamed that I was present at a ball, where the most conspicuous figure was a lady, dressed in white satin. When I woke, I was in my veritable room; but though the other figures had vanished, the lady in white was standing on the floor, all the rest of the vision having melted around her. She broke into little pieces, like those of a dissected puzzle, each of which vanished by itself. This case, of the fragment of a dream remaining, when all the rest was gone, I never experienced before or since.

There are circumstances, generally of a painful kind, under which certain objects so firmly take possession of the mind, that even in sound sleep they unwillingly relax their hold, and are ready to appear at the first wakeful moment, when they put on a terrible freshness. Such objects are, of course, prominent in our dreams; it seems as if that anxiety for the future, which has occupied us during the day, also lasts through the night. This state of mind, however, is fortunately exceptional, and under ordinary circumstances, I can say for myself, that my dreams have nothing whatever to do with the events of the preceding day. This experience directly opposes the theory that the objects of our thoughts before we fall asleep form the

substance of our nightly vision, or rather confines the application of this theory to an abnormal state of things. When my mind is tolerably at ease, my dreams generally refer to a period of my life which has passed away long ago, and has left scarcely a trace behind it, whereas of the persons with whom I converse almost daily, and in whom I take a serious interest, I rarely dream at all. During the period in question, I was studying, or pretending to study, the law in a solicitor's office; but I never seriously followed the profession, and at last I gave it up altogether. It was a period of seven years, but though I had many associates and was on good terms with all my fellows, there is not one among them with whom I am intimate now. As for my friends of the present, when I tell them that I was once a lawyer, they smile with bland incredulity, so different is the capacity in which I have long been known. Yet, strange to say, to this unfruitful, unprofitable period, unmarked as it was by a single stirring incident, do I commonly recur in my dreams, when my mind is not troubled. Again I am in that old-fashioned City office, feeling that it is my duty to be there, and somewhat uneasy lest I may be reprimanded for coming late. The person who may possibly reprimand is the senior partner, who has ceased to take a very active share in the business, and whose energies are commonly wasted in a vain endeavour to bring us youngsters to something like a sense of discipline. He is a native of Yorkshire, and though he has been from his youth a resident in the Great City, he speaks with a provincial bluntness which awes young cockneys, though they know that at bottom he is thoroughly good-humoured, and though they not infrequently smile at the slips in grammar of which he is occasionally guilty, and which have no connexion with the dialect of his country. Of this good old gentleman, dead long ago, and distinguished even from the men of his time by his unwieldy figure, his ill-fitting black coat, and his drab breeches, continued by gaiters, I never think by any chance during my wakeful hours, and I only think of him at the present moment because I am penning these confessions. And yet, as I have said, he is one of the most familiar figures in my dreams.

While he is before my mind, I will record a fact connected with him, which has no reference to my subject, but which is too curious to be passed over. One of our

favourite amusements consisted in scribbling verses, usually of a satirical kind, on the panes with which a wooden partition dividing two offices was liberally furnished, and which, deprived of transparency by a coat of whitening, could be conveniently used as tablets. Now, our old friend, who was not a votary of the Muses, was of opinion that the flowers of poetry, which cropped up so luxuriously on his panes, rather disfigured than adorned them, and emphatically declared one day that he would have no more "buckrams." We were less awed than puzzled. Why, in the name of wonder, were our verses called "buckrams"? They were doubtless replete with faults, but certainly these did not comprise stiffness, of which buckram is the accepted symbol. We generally had recourse to the "gay science" for the purpose of abusing each other, thinking that rhyme gave a special sting to satire; and when a boy in his teens wishes to bestow ill names on his associates, we may be sure that, if he invokes the Muse, she will accord to him the gift of ready utterance. Then why "buckrams"? After mature deliberation I arrived at the conclusion that the word "buckram" was a corruption of "epigram." That this corruption does not belong to London I am convinced, and I should be obliged if some north-country reader would inform me whether it is a product of Yorkshire.

Let me drop the wide-awake days of my youth, and the philological lucubrations therewith connected, and return to the subject of dreams. Of what material is that huge unreal world, in which we apparently pass so many hours, and which, while it lasts, so strongly resembles reality—of what material is it actually composed? In my case, when I am in a normal state, it is not made up of fragments collected from the immediate past, nor among all my visions have I ever found one that in the slightest degree pointed to the future. Some of them looked portentous enough, and inspired me with a superstitious fear that "something" was going to happen. But nothing ever did happen that could be tortured into an event predicted by the dream. And how in my sleep do I construct houses, and gardens, and streets, that I have never seen at all? Platonising enthusiasts will perhaps argue that in this case, I recal a previous state of existence. I don't believe it; there never was a past state of existence, in which there was a vast region between Fleet-street and Hol-

born, built as they are, which did not include Gough-square. I ask again, whence is the material of our dreams obtained? Shakespeare talks of the stuff that dreams are made of; but of what does the stuff consist?

DAISY'S TRIALS.

IN SEVEN CHAPTERS. CHAPTER V.

It seemed to Daisy that Myrrha grew lovelier every day. Daisy would sit and watch her, till the girl would look up from book or drawing to ask, "What is it, Aunt Daisy?"

"It is that you are so lovely, Myrrha, and that I wish, I wish I could be sure you are even half as good and true as you are lovely."

Flattered by this admiration, Myrrha answered affectionately:

"At any rate, auntie, I hope I'm not, as times go, and girls, very bad."

It did not seem to Daisy possible but that this loveliness should exercise at least as strong a fascination over Mr. Stewart as it did over her. Mr. Stewart was quite ready to admit it would be difficult to find a fairer creature than the girl who rode beside him. The soft spring wind, and the exercise in which she delighted, brought an ethereal bloom upon her young face, made her gleesome eyes shine crystal-clear, gave her fresh lips a more vivid red, and lent even her hair a brighter gloss, so that the netted-up mass looked like imprisoned sunshine.

Those rides together had come to be an all-but daily institution. It was long now since Myrrha had been spoken of between Mr. Stewart and Daisy. Mr. Stewart had left off talking of the probability that "business" might call him away.

It was towards the end of June that Myrrha went, prettily and appropriately, through the farce of "discovering" (what she had some time known) that Mr. Stewart and the owner of Redcombe were one and the same person. About this time Mr. Stewart announced to her that the owner of Redcombe, having heard of a strange and lovely princess in the neighbourhood, who had a passion for croquet, and for garden-parties, had determined, on a certain day, to give a fête in honour of the fair unknown, and had had a croquet-lawn, pronounced by competent judges to be admirable, prepared for the occasion. Myrrha at this lifted to Mr. Stewart a face so radiant with surprise and delight, that Mr. Stewart felt some-

thing of pleased tenderness towards such frankly shown pleasure.

"The owner of Redcombe is a friend of yours, then, Mr. Stewart! And you've been telling him about me. How very, very kind you are to me! I don't know what I won't do for you! I've suspected something of this, do you know, Mr. Stewart? He must be a very dear friend, for I've learnt that our horses come from his stables, and——"

"You're quite wrong, Myrrha, as to his being a very dear friend. On the contrary, he's my worst enemy."

Myrrha looked him in the face long and scrutinisingly.

"I know what you mean!" she then cried delightedly. "A man is said to be his own worst enemy. You are the owner of Redcombe! Oh, Mr. Stewart, if I loved (I mean liked) you before, shan't I love you ten times over now!" All this said with sparkling eyes, and eager lips, that looked quite ready to kiss him, if only he would bend towards them. "And you are going to give this fête for me? You are kind——"

"I give it to amuse your Aunt Daisy's visitor!"

"That is meant for a snub; but I won't take it as such. I know everything will be delightful! I know I shall enjoy myself as I've never done in my life before."

And when the day came it proved to be one of Myrrha's golden days—till towards its close, when it clouded over. All through the day Mr. Stewart so distinguished her that it must have been evident to all eyes that she was the queen of the fête. She more than once heard herself pointed out as the young lady Mr. Stewart was soon to marry; for, of course, their constant riding together had set such rumours afloat. Then, again, everything was admirably managed; she found golden traces of wealth everywhere, and Redcombe manor-house far surpassed her expectations. She was delighted with everything, and showed her delight with the most complete abandon. What she had said to Mr. Stewart, "That if she had loved him before, as the owner of Redcombe she loved him ten times over," seemed true in the very simplicity of truthfulness. She tried to be composed and dignified: she wished Mr. Stewart to feel that it was no mere child he was distinguishing, but a woman quite capable of well playing the part of mistress of Redcombe manor on some similar future occasion.

Against her will, however, the croquet-lawn attracted her: although Mr. Stewart

did not play croquet, she lost herself in the game, as legitimate part of which she considered light flirtation with all the men engaged in it. She received delicious homage, and for the first time since she came into the neighbourhood, felt herself appreciated. Every other girl, cast into the shade, turned sullen, and every man seemed ready to fall upon his knees. For a brief while she forgot her wisdom, and turned aside from the serious ambitions of life. The beauty of the day, the gaiety of the scene, the consciousness of her own pre-eminent loveliness, the almost as delicious consciousness of the exquisite perfection of her dress, intoxicated the nineteen-years' old creature. By-and-bye, after an hour or so, and when this sort of wholesale flirtation was growing fast and furious, Myrrha suddenly came to her more sober self, seeing Mr. Stewart, sitting by Daisy, watching her amusedly.

"This is all very pleasant, but it won't pay now, it can come after," was the substance of Myrrha's reflections. As soon as she could, and not too ceremoniously, using her spoilt-beauty air, she disengaged herself from the players, and joined her Aunt Daisy and Mr. Stewart.

"Will you, please, take me somewhere to have a cup of tea?" she asked Mr. Stewart. "I'm so tired and so thirsty."

"Won't you come too?" Mr. Stewart asked Daisy, as he rose, and offered Myrrha his arm; but Daisy, who was talking to an old lady who had just joined her, did not hear the question.

"I'm sorry you're tired already, fair frivolity!" Mr. Stewart said. "The day is not half over."

"I only mean tired of croquet. It's a stupid game; but, somehow, one gets excited over it."

"So it seems."

"Why did you call me 'fair frivolity'? You shall not call me such an ugly name!"

"'Ugly!' I defy any one to call you anything ugly. We were saying just now—your Aunt Daisy and I—that we had never seen a more lovely or a more happy-looking creature."

"Well, Mr. Stewart, I am happy to-day. I do enjoy myself. It is all so beautiful, and the thought that you planned it all for me, is certainly not the least cause of my happiness."

"For your Aunt Daisy's guest," corrected Mr. Stewart.

Myrrha made a grimace.

"You won't be so cruel as to try to spoil

all my happiness," she said. "You will spoil it all if you call me frivolous."

"I will call you only fair then."

"The fact is," continued Myrrha, "I am so happy to-day that I want to be still happier."

"Insatiable human nature. Let us hope that, as you are beginning to be tired, the cup of tea, of which we are in pursuit, will, by refreshing you, increase and prolong your happiness."

"I won't be shut up in that way, Mr. Stewart," said Myrrha, pouting, and giving the arm her hand was on a sharp pinch. "A cup of tea is a good thing, and I shall be glad to have it, but I want more than that. I want to know, just really and truly, that you don't dislike, or altogether despise, me."

"My dear young lady! your thoughts and your words are wild! Dislike you! despise you! Why should I, how could I, do either? I dislike you, and despise you, as much as I should dislike and despise some lovely flower because it did not happen to be my favourite among all flowers."

Poor Myrrha paused. She was quick enough to feel to the full all that was hidden in this answer.

"Have you a favourite flower, Mr. Stewart?" she asked, after that pause.

"The flower that was Chaucer's worship is mine."

Myrrha's "Ah!" was so significant and intelligent, that he felt sure she was in the dark as to what he meant.

"You remember, no doubt," he went on, "Chaucer's account of how he used to rise early, and go far, to see the first sunbeams fall on his favourite, and of how he would spend a day content lying on the grass encircling his flower with his arms?"

A thrill in Mr. Stewart's voice perplexed Myrrha; she looked up into his face, and saw a strange light there.

With a vague recollection of having heard of Chaucer's *Romaunt of the Rose*, Myrrha said, after a few seconds of reflection: "Now I shall know of whom to feel jealous. I shall look out for your rose."

"The rose is such a universal favourite, Myrrha! Would you have thought me the man to worship at the shrine at which all offer homage?"

"I don't know that I understand you to-day. Tell me what flower you would give me as my emblem?"

"Let me see!" He looked at her investigatively. "If you will come to the conservatory, I will show you a new geranium,

the 'bride!' to which it seems to me, you, in that delicate dress, bear a wonderful resemblance."

"Well," said Myrrha, after looking at the flower, "it's pretty enough, but it has no sweetness; and—do you care for geraniums, Mr. Stewart?" looking up into his face wistfully.

"'Care for' is one of those indefinite feminine expressions a man doesn't exactly appreciate. I admire the 'bride.' Who could help admiring such an exquisite creature?"

Then they passed from the conservatory into a room where a stately elderly lady, his housekeeper, was dispensing tea.

"This is a charming room!" exclaimed Myrrha. "Just a little lightening up, and it would make the most delightful ladies' morning-room."

"When the 'bride' comes to Redcombe, if, indeed, she ever comes, she will make many alterations, doubtless. I leave the whole place alone till she issues her commands."

Myrrha looked at Mr. Stewart, then looked down; she wished to blush, but her delicate complexion was not of the blushing sort.

Other people came and went, and Myrrha kept Mr. Stewart at her side, engaging him in a half-sentimental war of words, speaking low, so that he might need to bend down to hear her, conscious that elderly ladies watched them curiously, and young ladies watched them enviously; leaning back in that "delicious" chair, Myrrha was lazily happy. The eyes raised to Mr. Stewart's had a soft languor in them which rather startled him; he did not believe in much real softness in Myrrha; he had judged her nature to be rather cold and hard, and, as it were, thin; yet, perhaps, he was mildly flattered at the marked preference of a creature so young and so lovely. "Marked preference for Redcombe over any other home of which she has believed she had the chance," Mr. Stewart inwardly commented. But perhaps the cynicism of the comment was somewhat forced.

Myrrha kept her position, and so kept Mr. Stewart beside her till she fancied she saw signs of restlessness and of wandering attention; then she said:

"Mr. Stewart, don't you think poor dear Aunt Daisy will feel neglected if we don't go and look for her?"

This "poor dear Aunt Daisy" annoyed Mr. Stewart. "I have, for some time, been wishing to rejoin her," he answered.

"I do think you are the most terribly ungallant man I ever met. To punish you for that atrocious speech you must, before we leave the house, show me the library. Ah! Mr. Stewart, this is a grand room," she said, looking round it with eyes that, for a moment, seemed reverent. "If I might come and read here," she said, coaxingly; "if you would tell me what books to read, and what I ought to think about them! If you would teach me a little! If you would spare me just one hour every day for a reading lesson! Why do you shake your head?"

"Too dangerous a position for me to play schoolmaster to so pretty a pupil."

"I wish I were not pretty, then, Mr. Stewart."

"Excuse me for saying, I doubt the sincerity of that wish."

"I don't much care about being only pretty. I should like to be beautiful."

"Beautiful in the way your Aunt Daisy is, for instance? But it needs a great deal to gain that sort of beauty."

"I suppose you are jesting, Mr. Stewart; but it is not pretty of you to laugh at poor Aunt Daisy."

"Miss Brown, you know better than to suppose I am jesting. I say your Aunt Daisy is beautiful."

"Then, if that is beauty," said Myrrha, losing her temper all at once, "to look old and worn, to have irregular features, and no complexion to speak of, I retract my wish to be beautiful. But either you are jesting, or you are most extraordinarily infatuated."

"It is certainly not a subject on which I should choose to jest. I am quite willing to grant that you are far prettier than your aunt. Your features are not irregular, you have a complexion to speak of, you are in the first fresh bloom of youth; but I maintain that your Aunt Daisy has a higher kind of beauty."

Myrrha paused before speaking, then she said: "I know I have made you angry, because you call me Miss Brown. I am more sorry than I can say. You had been so kind to me. And now my happy day is spoilt. But, I can't help saying it is very extraordinary, Mr. Stewart, that you should be so deluded about Aunt Daisy. Your admiration of her character perplexes me. I have the feeling that some day you will know her better, and see her differently, and then——"

"Miss Brown, pause in time. You are wise; don't let your feelings carry you so

far that you say what I could never forgive."

Myrrha took his advice; she did pause: they were just then walking down a shady and solitary beech glade. She took her hand from his arm, and, leaning a moment against a beech trunk, indulged in a short, a very short, storm of tears. Mr. Stewart merely waited. In a few minutes she passed her embroidered handkerchief lightly over her face, then looked up into Mr. Stewart's.

"Does it show? Are my eyes red? Do I look as if I had been crying?"

"Not in the least."

"Now, Mr. Stewart, I am not going to move from here till you forgive me, and call me Myrrha again. I don't think I am much more to blame than you are. You don't know how you hurt me. You are always showing me how frivolous and empty you think me: how you despise me. You never seem to believe in me if I show any desire to be different: if I own how I long to have some one strong and true, and on whom I could rely to help me, you ridicule me. You have been very, very cruel to me, just, I suppose, because I have shown frankly how I like you, how I desire your kindness. This was such a happy day, because you seemed to like me to-day: and now it's all turned to bitterness, and I'm very unhappy." Her eyes were full of tears, and her voice was ominously excited. "No, I won't, won't, won't move till you call me Myrrha, and say something kind to me."

"We will talk of all this some other time, Myrrha. Come, take my arm again. Forgive you? Yes, I forgive you—and you must forgive me if you have anything to forgive, and, if what you say is true, you have a great deal."

Myrrha, after a suppressed sob or two, took his arm, and let him lead her to where, more than an hour ago, they had left Daisy, and where Daisy still sat.

A day or two after this Myrrha met Mr. Stewart with the words:

"I've found it out, Mr. Stewart, it is not the rose that is your favourite flower, though you let me think so. I have found out what is your favourite. I came, quite accidentally, in a book I was reading, upon a quotation from Chaucer, in which he speaks of the 'Day's Eye,' and of his love for it——"

Mr. Stewart rightly concluded from this explanation of Myrrha's, that she had been studying Chaucer purposely to discover the passage.

"Well," he said, "I hope you approve my taste and Chaucer's?"

"Oh, of course." Then, after a pause, "Will you forgive me, I wonder, if I ask a very rude question?"

"I will try to do so; but might it not be better, if the question be a rude one, to leave it unasked?"

"I cannot. I am too interested in having it answered; but—I'm afraid you'll be so dreadfully angry!"

"You take the choice, you see, between risking my dreadful anger and losing the chance of gratifying your curiosity."

"It is much more than mere curiosity."

"And it will be, I dare say, much less than 'dreadful' anger."

"It is only this: I want to know, Mr. Stewart, why you don't marry Aunt Daisy?"

"Is it 'only that' you wish to know, Miss Brown?" Mr. Stewart's face reddened angrily. Myrrha, seeing this, and hearing the tone in which he called her Miss Brown, hid her face in her hands, and looked out at him from between her fingers, pretending to shrink away. "The question is very easily answered. I don't marry your Aunt Daisy because she won't let me; because she won't marry me. There is no other reason; there can be no other: but this, you will allow, is a sufficient one."

"Aunt Daisy says she will never marry, and she says it in a way that shows she means it."

"Of course she means it; your Aunt Daisy always says what she means."

"No, Mr. Stewart; Aunt Daisy, I dare say, always means what she says, but she means, also, a great deal she never says. She is very secret; I feel quite certain that Aunt Daisy conceals something very important. It has crossed my mind to wonder whether she may not be already married!"

Mr. Stewart laughed derisively. "So, you've been making your Aunt Daisy the heroine of a sensational novel, have you?"

"Mr. Stewart, you promised your anger should be less than dreadful, but it isn't, you're dreadfully angry; and it isn't fair you should be. If you knew my reasons for touching this subject, if you understood my heart on this subject, you would, at least, pity me."

Something rose to Mr. Stewart's lips which he preferred not to say; he turned from Myrrha abruptly and went into the

house; she had waylaid him in the garden. But she contrived to speak a few more confidential words to him before he left.

"If you had been a little more tolerant with me, I, perhaps, could have told you things that might have been useful to you. Yes, you needn't look so superbly scornful; though I am but 'a child of nineteen,' as you've told me often enough, and you are a man of forty—still I am a woman, and you're only a man, and women know by instinct things that men's reason and wisdom never seem to teach them. Of course, if there is really between you and Aunt Daisy some insuperable obstacle, nothing will be of any good; but if there is nothing but some foolish fancy of hers, there is a thing that would help you—to make her a little jealous. Oh, yes, I know you think this a treasonable suggestion; but, Mr. Stewart, Aunt Daisy is only a woman, not even a very wise one. Having said this, I will run away." Which she did.

In truth, Myrrha was getting tired of Redcombe Cottage.

"If he's going to marry Aunt Daisy I wish he'd do it. If he isn't going to marry Aunt Daisy, why then I wish to make him sure and certain that he isn't. I don't want to be worried. I like Mr. Stewart, and don't I like Redcombe Manor House! I believe I could get fond of Mr. Stewart, and I know I could get fond of Redcombe Manor! If I could get them I should be glad; but I don't want to be kept shilly-shallying: to be made to feel worried, and to waste my time. I shall soon be twenty—after twenty a girl like me often begins to go off and to look sickly, and to get too thin. I'm sure I don't want to take him from Aunt Daisy, if she means to have him; but if she doesn't, I don't see why she should play dog-in-the-manger."

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